



LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP, DAUPHIN COUNTY PA

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCES



**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
DAUPHIN COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
RESOLUTION NO. 04-08**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCES
FOR LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP**

WHEREAS, Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code (the "MPC") sets forth the procedures and requirements for municipalities to adopt comprehensive plans; and

WHEREAS, Section 301(c) provides that comprehensive plans shall be reviewed at least every ten (10) years; and

WHEREAS, the most recent comprehensive plan for Lower Paxton Township (the "Township") was adopted in 1992; and

WHEREAS, over two years ago the Board of Supervisors decided to undertake a review of the comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors retained the consulting firm of Gannett Fleming, Inc. to assist with the review of the comprehensive plan and the preparation of a new comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors also appointed a Planning Advisory Committee to assist in the review of the comprehensive plan and obtain public input throughout the review process; and

WHEREAS, the Township Planning Commission also participated in the comprehensive plan review process; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, the Planning Advisory Committee and Gannett Fleming, Inc. have been in the process of reviewing the comprehensive plan and preparation of a new comprehensive plan for more than two years; and

WHEREAS, a final draft of the new comprehensive plan has been prepared and a public hearing on the new comprehensive plan has been conducted pursuant to Section 302(b) of the MPC; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors desires to adopt the new comprehensive plan, which is entitled, "A Comprehensive Plan for Community Resources."

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Lower Paxton Township that the new comprehensive plan entitled "A Comprehensive Plan for Community Resources" is hereby adopted as the comprehensive plan for Lower Paxton Township.

DULY ADOPTED as Resolution 04-08, this 20th day of January 2004.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP


Secretary

By: 
Chairman

LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP, DAUPHIN COUNTY, PA

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Adopted by the Lower Paxton Township Board of Supervisors
January 20, 2004

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Board of Supervisors

William Hawk, Chairman
William Seeds, Vice-Chairman
William Hornung
Gary Crissman
David Blain

Planning Commission

Henry Adams
Robert Cohan, Jr.
Ernest Gingrich
Dennis Guise
Fredrick Lighty, Chairman
W. Roy Newsome, Jr.

Planning Advisory Committee

Wharton Bittle
Robert Davis
Karen Frese
Rhonda Hakundy-Jones
Richard Heiss
Edna Hutchins
Christopher Judd
John Kerschner
Bernard Plawsky
Joan Schilling
Kathy Weiser

Staff

George Wolfe, Township Manager
Lori Wissler, Planning and Zoning Officer
Dianne Moran, Planning and Zoning Officer
Joseph Sutor, P.E., Township Engineer/
Public Works Director
Daniel Bair, Chief of Police/Public Safety
Director
William Weaver, Sewer Department
Director
Brian Luetchford, Parks and Recreation
Director
Donna Speakman, Finance Director

Consultants

Gannett Fleming, Inc.
Community Planning Consultants
CET Engineering Services

Table of Contents

Preface	Overview of the Comprehensive Planning Process	P-1
Chapter 1	Introduction to Lower Paxton Township	1-1
Chapter 2	Background Studies Summaries	2-1
Chapter 3	Values, Vision, and Goals	3-1
Chapter 4	Action Planning and Implementation of the Vision	4-1
Appendix A	Planning Maps	
Appendix B	Glossary and References	B-1
Appendix C	Background Studies: Full Text Report (under separate cover)	C-1

List of Figures

Figure 1-1 Location of Lower Paxton Township..... 1-1

Figure 2-1 Lower Paxton Township Racial Composition, 2000..... 2-3

Figure 2-2 Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level, 2000..... 2-5

Figure 2-3 Housing Unit Growth, 1980-2000..... 2-6

Figure 2-4 Age of Housing Units..... 2-7

Figure 2-5 Comparison of Housing Unit Types..... 2-8

Figure 2-6 Residential Building Permit Trends, 1990-2000..... 2-9

Figure 2-7 Lower Paxton Township and Adjacent Municipalities..... 2-12

Figure 3-1 Community Planning Units (CPUs) of Lower Paxton Township..... 3-2

List of Tables

Table 2-1 Population Growth Trends, 1950-2000.....	2-2
Table 2-2 Age Cohort Distribution, 1990- 2000.....	2-3
Table 2-3 Household Characteristics Analysis, 1990 and 2000.....	2-4
Table 2-4 Educational Attainment by Persons 25 Years and Older, 2000.....	2-4
Table 2-5 Population Projections.....	2-5
Table 2-6 Housing Unit Density, 1980-2000.....	2-7
Table 2-7 Housing Affordability, 2000.....	2-8
Table 2-8 Household Projections.....	2-9
Table 2-9 Existing Land Use Distribution In Lower Paxton Township, 2002.....	2-10
Table 2-10 Roadway Classifications for State Roads in Lower Paxton Township.....	2-15
Table 2-11 Recently Completed Transportation Planning Projects.....	2-17
Table 2-12 Pennsylvania Historical Markers in Lower Paxton Township.....	2-21
Table 2-13 Central Dauphin School District Projected Enrollment.....	2-24
Table 2-14 Park and Recreational Facilites in Lower Paxton Township.....	2-28
Table 2-15 Soils in Lower Paxton Township.....	2-36
 Table 3-1 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) Associated with Proposed and Projected Developoment.....	 3-4
 Table 4-1 Sample Menu of Traffic Calming Techniques.....	 4-24
Table 4-2 Local Funding Mechanisms.....	4-40

List of Maps - Appendix A

- Map 1 Population Density, 2000
 - Map 2 Existing Land Use, 2002
 - Map 3 Functional Classification, 2000
 - Map 4 Average Annual Daily Traffic Volumes, 2000
 - Map 5 Community Facilities
 - Map 6 Recreational Resources
 - Map 7 Public Utilities
 - Map 8 Water Resource Sensitivity
 - Map 9 Land Resource Sensitivity
 - Map 10 Vacant Lands (Key Opportunity Sites)
 - Map 11 Township Vision
 - Map 12 Future Land Use and Transportation
 - Map 13 Bicycle-Pedestrian Conceptual Network
-



preface Overview of the Comprehensive Planning Process

Role and Purpose of the
Comprehensive Plan

Relationship between the
Comprehensive Plan and other plans

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

Comprehensive Planning Process

Role and Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

This Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for the development of Lower Paxton Township over the next 10-20 years. It provides a vision and a general direction for municipal policy and community improvement.

The Comprehensive Plan evaluates the existing land use, transportation systems, housing, community facilities and services, and natural and cultural resources of Lower Paxton Township, primarily within the Township boundaries, but also in the context of the broader Harrisburg Region. The Plan projects future growth trends based on these analyses and proposes the best possible land use and implementation tools to accommodate expected growth, while protecting the Township's vast and varied resources.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a framework for decision making in the areas of land use, transportation, housing, municipal services, utilities, and natural resources conservation, all of which are vital to the prosperity of the Township. Implementation of the Plan and its vision will occur through recommended strategies, including review and revision of municipal ordinances and other policy tools.

Lower Paxton Township's first comprehensive plan was adopted in 1972, shortly following the enactment of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code that authorizes such planning efforts. The Township has admirably updated its comprehensive plan every ten years, adopting new comprehensive plans in 1982 and 1992.

Reasons for Updating the 1992 Comprehensive Plan

Since the 1992 Lower Paxton Township Comprehensive Plan was adopted, significant growth has continued to occur. While this growth has benefited those who desire to live and work in the Township, and the broader Harrisburg Region, some effects of this growth have included residential and commercial sprawl, commercial encroachment on residential neighborhoods, and potential threats to valuable natural and man-made resources.

In the interest of preserving the quality of life found in Lower Paxton Township, the Township Administration and staff determined the need for an assessment of current Township resources and regulations. Such an assessment would evaluate the rate of development, impacts to infrastructure and resources, and the adequacy of existing community facilities.

"If you don't have a picture of where your township wants to go, all the decisions just kind of get made without a purpose. They don't add up to a complete picture of the future."

Jeff Soule
Policy Director,
American Planning Association

In light of population projections that indicate that growth in the Township will continue, the Administration and staff determined the need for long-range planning to address the future needs of the Township. Housing, transportation and utility infrastructure, and community services will be needed for new residents and businesses. New, improved and/or expanded facilities and services may be needed to meet the needs of this future population.

Finally, redevelopment opportunities exist for numerous sites throughout the Township, particularly in regards to commercial properties. Redevelopment of property can enhance adjacent properties and neighborhoods or detract from them. Careful consideration of redevelopment goals and objectives is increasingly important to the Township as areas become fully developed.

What this Plan does...

- Replaces the 1992 Lower Paxton Township Comprehensive Plan as the policy guide to community development
- Focuses on current trends and issues in Lower Paxton Township and addresses these with innovative solutions.
- Provides the best possible projection of future conditions, based on current patterns and strategies, to create a more desirable future.
- Directs future change through a vision of community potential.

What this Plan does not do...

- Does not determine the timing of land development, neither public nor private.
- Does not preclude future analysis or decision making.

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as enacted and amended empowers municipalities:

- to plan their development and
- to govern the same by zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances, planned residential development and other ordinances, by official maps, by the reservation of certain land for future public purpose and by the acquisition of such land.

Relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and other plans

The Lower Paxton Township Comprehensive Plan gives policy guidance and direction to preparation of Township regulations and codes. The Plan also makes policy recommendations to update the following documents to provide residents of Lower Paxton Township with the best possible quality of life.

Lower Paxton Township Zoning Ordinance

Lower Paxton Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

Transportation Plan

Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan

Act 167 Stormwater Management Plans

County Plan

The Lower Paxton Township Comprehensive Plan aims to guide Township policy and community improvement in a manner that is consistent with that of the Dauphin County Comprehensive Plan, as required by the Pennsylvania MPC. The Plan acknowledges the broader goals of the County, while making specific recommendations for the Township.

FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

Why is the Comprehensive Plan being revised or rewritten?

As the pace of change in the Harrisburg region and throughout Pennsylvania continues, public policy must be reviewed. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan has become outdated in terms of the guidance it gives to the Township. The 2003 Plan will review and revise relevant goals and strategies and introduce new methods to guide the future character and development of Lower Paxton Township.

How will the plan be used?

The Plan will be used by Township policy makers, community planners, municipal agencies, landowners, and developers to evaluate proposed development against the Plan's vision and goals.

Who is in charge of making this plan work?

While the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and municipal officials will implement this Plan, public support for its vision and recommendations will be most important. The public includes residents, businesses owners, and organizations that have a direct interest in the future of the Township.

What is a Community Planning Unit or CPU ?

A Community Planning Unit is a region of the Township. The Township was divided into seven CPUs in order to gather more detailed input from residents on local issues and concerns. See Figure 3-1 on page 3-2 for an illustration of the Township's CPUs.

Will this plan change the zoning in my neighborhood?

This Plan makes broad recommendations concerning potential land use changes, but it makes no zoning changes. The plan may be used to guide and support future changes made to the Township's zoning ordinance.

Does this plan protect the Township's natural areas and open space?

Through CPU meetings and the Planning Advisory Committee, citizens identified natural areas and open space conservation as priorities for the Township. Through a variety of recommended strategies, this Plan proposes conservation of these areas.

Will this plan improve traffic congestion?

This Plan updates the most recent Township Transportation Plan. It programs improvements and outlines strategies to incorporate transportation improvements and enhancements into public and private projects.

Comprehensive Planning Process

The comprehensive planning process involved the continuous participation of Township staff and officials, the Township Planning Commission, the Planning Advisory Committee, and the general public during the five phases of the project:

- Phase I developed an **understanding** of the Township and each of the seven CPUs based on existing data collection and public participation. This Phase resulted in the definition of a probable future for the Township based on recent development trends.
- Phase II developed a **vision** for the Township's future based on public visioning forums that sketched an image of a desirable future quality of life in the Township. From this vision, a series of Township-wide and CPU **goals and objectives** was derived.
- Phase III developed an **Action Plan** for each of the seven CPUs, based on local goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Phase IV developed a **Township-wide Comprehensive Plan** to achieve the Township vision through various planning aspects, including land use, transportation, and municipal services.
- Phase V prepared the Comprehensive Plan for **adoption** by the Township.

